

Working to bring quality, sustainable jobs to Illinois and help our economy grow and prosper, Congresswoman Debbie Halvorson (IL-11), joined Congressmen Walt Minnick (ID-1), Bobby Bright (AL-2), and Frank Kratovil (MD-1), in introducing the AMERICA Works Act, H.R. 4072, a bill to help Americans acquire the necessary skills to succeed in the 21st Century global economy.

"In tough economic times we must do everything we can to provide our citizens with the tools they need to secure good paying jobs that won't be outsourced overseas," said Halvorson. "This bill will jumpstart our economy by promoting American innovation and revitalizing our manufacturing sector. Investing in American workers will sustain our future prosperity."

The AMERICA Works Act would reform federal job training programs by amending three job training laws: the Trade Act of 1974, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

Under this legislation, funding preference would be given to local education and job training programs that result in national manufacturing industry-recognized credentials. This would ensure that federal funds are targeted toward community colleges and workforce training programs that adequately prepare participants for jobs in the manufacturing sector. It will also make it easier for employers to identify applicants who are certified in the necessary skills to succeed and advance in a manufacturing career.

"True economic reform means not only righting our economic ship, but also pursuing the strategies that will ensure we maintain our manufacturing competitiveness and provide the best possible pathways to employment in high-quality, middle-class jobs for all workers. We commend Congresswoman Halvorson and her colleagues for introducing this bill which will help ensure both new and transitioning workers have the education and skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century manufacturing economy," said Emily Stover DeRocco, President of the Manufacturing Institute and Senior Vice President of the National Association of Manufacturers

"This legislation will not only help young people just entering the workforce, but also experienced workers who have lost their jobs and are looking for new employment," said Halvorson. "In Congress we're focusing on three priorities - jobs, jobs, and jobs."

H.R. 4072 has been referred to the House Committees on Education and Labor, and Ways and Means. More information, including the full text of the bill, can be found at thomas.loc.gov.

